



Onslow Primary School Volunteer Policy

Purpose

- To provide clear guidelines for staff and volunteers regarding the involvement of volunteers in activities conducted by the school.
- To comply with current legislative requirements in relation to working with children.

Rationale

Volunteers provide an important service to the school. They participate in a range of activities including sports coaching and management, assistance with classroom activities, governance, supervision and facilitation of fundraising events. It is important to support volunteers as well as provide clear guidelines for the conduct of volunteers.

Definition

A volunteer is an adult who offers services for school activities, but receives no remuneration or reward from the school for the services provided. Volunteers may be parents, guardians, relatives of a student or community members.

For the purpose of this policy a volunteer includes:

- A parent of children enrolled at the school.
- A person who does not have a child enrolled at the school and who will be assisting with classroom activities or other school activities.
- Any person who will be assisting with activities such as excursions, sports training or other school events, where they may be required to take responsibility for a small group of children. This may or may not be under the direct supervision of a teacher.

For the purpose of this policy a volunteer does not include the following people/events:

- Guests who are invited by the classroom teacher to provide a brief presentation on a specific topic
- Relatives/friends who attend the classroom to observe a particular event such as news time or a student talk.
- Visitors in the classroom for brief periods of time, during which the teacher is constantly present.

General Guidelines for Volunteers

- All volunteers must ensure that they have the permission of the school to undertake activities at the school.
- Any volunteer, other than a parent, who anticipates having contact with children on 5 or more days in one calendar year must obtain a Working with Children Check prior to commencing. Providing the receipt for application is acceptable until the card is received.
- In accordance with the criminal screening policy all volunteers should also complete a Confidential Declaration form prior to undertaking volunteer work. Where volunteer work is ongoing this form should be completed annually. Under some circumstances the Principal

may waive this requirement. This would usually be in the case of special guests invited to the school assembly.

- The School does not condone any contact between volunteers and students other than for the approved activity in which the volunteer is participating.
- If a volunteer is unable to conduct a planned activity they should notify the school as soon as possible so that an approved replacement can be identified or the activity can be cancelled.
- Volunteers must advise the school as soon as possible of any concerns they have regarding the conduct of their duty or the student with whom they are in contact.
- Volunteers in school are bound by a code of confidentiality. Any concerns that Volunteers have about the children they work with/come into contact with should be voiced with the Class Teacher and NOT with the parents of the child/persons outside school. Comments regarding children's behaviour or learning can be highly sensitive, and if taken out of context, can cause distress to the parents of a child if they hear about such issues through a third party rather than directly from the school.
- Volunteers who are concerned about anything another adult in the school does or says should raise the matter with the Principal or the Deputy Principals.

Involvement in Activities

Under most circumstances, volunteers will undertake activities with a staff member.

Activities may only be undertaken without a teaching staff member if:

- The Principal has granted prior approval
- The person has capacity to do so
- The person has the appropriate clearance and
- The volunteer accepts duty of care responsibility.

Liability Issues

Volunteers are protected from liability for community work undertaken at the school if these activities are undertaken in accordance with the school guidelines, are within the scope of the school's community work and they are undertaken in good faith. Further, they are protected by the Department's public liability and personal accident insurance arrangements with RiskCover whilst acting as a volunteer.

Guidelines Specific to Parents Volunteering

- Parents are welcomed and invited to be involved in their child's education. All parents who work as volunteers at school will be expected to read and sign a Confidentiality Statement. They will need to respect the confidentiality of staff, students and other parents at all times.
- All volunteers are not to discuss any information they obtain at school with anybody, other than classroom teachers and the Principal or delegate. Any parent/carer not fulfilling these requirements may be excluded from the volunteer program.
- Parents are not required to complete a sign in/out form. In the event of an emergency situation the parent must follow the instructions of the classroom teacher until such time as the emergency is declared over.
- Parents are required to complete a Confidential Declaration form before participating as a volunteer.
- Parents will need to accept responsibility and supervision of pre-school age children under their care for the duration of their time at the school. It is recommended that parent volunteers arrange for alternative care for their preschool child, as they can often distract from the normal order of the classroom, thus compromising the learning of the students in the class. In circumstances where this does not occur a teacher may choose to inform a parent that should they volunteer their time, they will not be able to bring their pre-school age child.

Reference Documents

Department of Education and Training, Duty of Care for Students, April 2003.
Volunteers (Protection from Liability) Act 2002 (WA)

ONSLow PRIMARY SCHOOL

PARENT AND COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS' CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

On behalf of Onslow Primary School thank you for volunteering your time at our school.

In light of Privacy Legislation and out of respect for every member of our school community, we would ask that you please read and sign the statement about School Confidentiality below. By following these few simple guidelines we will ensure that each person's rights, privacy and dignity are protected.

Prior to commencing volunteer activities please ensure that you have read our Volunteer Policy and Parent Code of Conduct (available on our website at www.onslowschool.wa.edu.au).

Please return this form, to the Administration Office.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Yours sincerely

Jacqueline Barry
Principal

(Please detach and return to school either through the front office or your child's class teacher)

Confidentiality at Onslow Primary School

Child's Name/s _____

Child's Room _____

**Please include the name and rooms of all your children.*

In volunteering at Onslow Primary School I _____ understand that in fulfilling this role I become one of a team of people who work to provide quality education to the students in our care. I understand that my role is one of support for the school staff and students.

Whilst fulfilling the assigned duties as a volunteer, I will respect the confidentiality of all staff and students at all times. I will not discuss or divulge any information relating to school activities, events or incidents that may occur which may be detrimental to the rights, privacy and dignity of all members of the school community.

I have read and returned all the relevant Volunteer Registration paperwork.

Signed _____